

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 1 through 13 without prejudice or disclaimer of their subject matter, and add claims 14 through 37, as follows:

1 14. A method of reducing standby time for printing in a system of networked
2 printers connected to at least one host computer, the method comprising:

3 registering at least one item of network print information in at least one host
4 computer;

5 accessing the network printer information registered in the at least one host
6 computer in response to a command for printing print-data being issued;

7 transmitting a request command from the at least one host computer to the
8 networked printers requesting the networked printers to transmit standby print
9 information to the at least one host computer, the standby print information relating to the
10 amount of standby print operations of the respective networked printers;

11 determining a minimum-utilized networked printer having a lowest amount of
12 standby print operations from among the networked printers having standby print
13 operations from the standby print information transmitted from the networked printers to
14 the at least one host computer in response to the request command; and

15 transmitting the print-data from the at least one host computer to the network
16 printer determined to be the minimum-utilized network printer.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein registering at least one item of network print
2 information in at least one host computer comprises:

3 determining whether a command for registering network printer information in the
4 at least one host computer has been issued;

5 detecting the network printers connected to the network; and

6 storing the network printer information in a memory of the at least one host
7 computer.

1 16. The method of claim 15, further comprising assigning priority numbers to the
2 network printer information in order of detection and storing the assigning priority
3 numbers in the memory.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein determining a minimum-utilized networked
2 printer comprises:

3 detecting the priority numbers assigned to the networked printers having the
4 lowest amounts of standby print operations; and

5 selecting a networked printer having a preferential priority number as the
6 minimum-utilized network printer.

1 18. The method of claim 14, wherein the network printer information comprises
2 an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked printer.

1 19. The method of claim 15, wherein the network printer information comprises
2 an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked printer.

1 20. The method of claim 16, wherein the network printer information comprises
2 an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked printer.

1 21. The method of claim 17, wherein the network printer information comprises
2 an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked printer.

1 22. A program storage device, readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a
2 program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method of reducing
3 standby time for printing in a system of networked printers connected to at least one host
4 computer, the method comprising:

5 registering at least one item of network print information in at least one host
6 computer;

7 accessing the network printer information registered in the at least one host
8 computer in response to a command for printing print-data being issued;

9 transmitting a request command from the at least one host computer to the
10 networked printers requesting the networked printers to transmit standby print
11 information to the at least one host computer, the standby print information relating to the

12 amount of standby print operations of the respective networked printers;

13 determining a minimum-utilized networked printer having a lowest amount of
14 standby print operations from among the networked printers having standby print
15 operations from the standby print information transmitted from the networked printers to
16 the at least one host computer in response to the request command; and

17 transmitting the print-data from the at least one host computer to the network
18 printer determined to be the minimum-utilized network printer.

1 23. The program storage device of claim 22, wherein registering at least one item
2 of network print information in at least one host computer comprises:

3 determining whether a command for registering network printer information in the
4 at least one host computer has been issued;

5 detecting the network printers connected to the network; and

6 storing the network printer information in a memory of the at least one host
7 computer.

1 24. The program storage device of claim 23, the method further comprising
2 assigning priority numbers to the network printer information in order of detection and
3 storing the assigning priority numbers in the memory.

1 25. The program storage device of claim 24, wherein determining a

2 minimum-utilized networked printer comprises:

3 detecting the priority numbers assigned to the networked printers having the
4 lowest amounts of standby print operations; and

5 selecting a networked printer having a preferential priority number as the
6 minimum-utilized network printer.

1 26. The program storage device of claim 22, wherein the network printer
2 information comprises an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked
3 printer.

1 27. The program storage device of claim 23, wherein the network printer
2 information comprises an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked
3 printer.

1 28. The program storage device of claim 24, wherein the network printer
2 information comprises an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked
3 printer.

1 29 . The program storage device of claim 25, wherein the network printer
2 information comprises an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked
3 printer.

1 30. A system comprising:
2 at least one host computer;
3 a plurality of network printers;
4 a network adapted to transfer data between the at least one host computer and the
5 plurality of network printers;
6 wherein the at least one host computer includes a controller, a memory operatively
7 connected to the controller, and an interface adapted to transfer data between the
8 controller and the network;
9 wherein each of the plurality of network printers include a controller, a memory
10 operatively connected to the controller, and an interface adapted to transfer data between
11 the controller and the network;
12 wherein the controller of the at least one host computer is adapted to register at
13 least one item of network print information in the memory of the at least one host
14 computer;
15 wherein the controller of the at least one host computer is adapted to access the
16 network printer information registered in the memory of the at least one host computer in
17 response to a command for printing print-data being issued;
18 wherein the controller of the at least one host computer is adapted to transmit a
19 request command from the at least one host computer to the plurality of network printers
20 via the interface of the at least one host computer and the network and the respective

21 interfaces of the plurality of network printers requesting the networked printers to
22 transmit standby print information to the at least one host computer via the respective
23 interfaces of the plurality of network printers and the network and the interface of the at
24 least one host computer, the controller of each respective one of the plurality of network
25 printers being adapted to determine the standby print information relating to the amount
26 of standby print operations of the respective networked printers;

27 wherein the controller of the at least one host computer is adapted to determine a
28 minimum-utilized networked printer having a lowest amount of standby print operations
29 from among the networked printers having standby print operations from the standby
30 print information transmitted from the networked printers to the at least one host
31 computer in response to the request command; and

32 wherein the controller of the at least one host computer is adapted to transmit the
33 print-data from the at least one host computer to the network printer determined to be the
34 minimum-utilized network printer via the interface of the at least one host computer and
35 to the network and the interface of the network printer determined to be the
36 minimum-utilized network printer.

1 31. The system of claim 30, wherein registering at least one item of network print
2 information in the memory of the at least one host computer comprises:

3 the controller of the at least one host computer determining whether a command
4 for registering network printer information in the at least one host computer has been

5 issued;

6 the controller of the at least one host computer detecting the network printers
7 connected to the network; and

8 the controller of the at least one host computer storing the network printer
9 information in a memory of the at least one host computer.

1 32. The system of claim 31, further comprising the controller of the at least one
2 host computer being adapted to assign priority numbers to the network printer
3 information in order of detection and storing the assigning priority numbers in the
4 memory.

1 33. The system of claim 32, wherein determining a minimum-utilized networked
2 printer by the controller of the at least one host computer comprises:

3 the controller of the at least one host computer detecting the priority numbers
4 assigned to the networked printers having the lowest amounts of standby print operations;
5 and

6 the controller of the at least one host computer selecting a networked printer
7 having a preferential priority number as the minimum-utilized network printer.

1 34. The system of claim 30, wherein the network printer information comprises an
2 IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked printer.

1 35. The system of claim 31, wherein the network printer information comprises an
2 IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked printer.

1 36. The system of claim 32, wherein the network printer information comprises an
2 IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked printer.

1 37 . The system of claim 33, wherein the network printer information comprises
2 an IP (Internet Protocol) address of the registered networked printer.